



Sectarianism, Extremism and Hate Crime: The impacts on the Ahmadiyya Community



FAITH MATTERS

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**SECTARIANISM, EXTREMISM AND HATE CRIME:
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Foreword

The rise in anti-Ahmadi hate incidents that were reported to the Tell MAMA (Measuring anti-Muslim Attacks) project after the murder of Asad Shah are of significant concern to all of us at Faith Matters.

The murder of Asad Shah was a depressing reminder of how some believe that it is their moral duty to harm and take the life of another simply on the basis that they are protecting faith. What they are actually doing is against the Islamic tenets of faith, humanity, and dialogue and their actions cannot return us to a place where violence trumps all. We must all resist, within the laws of this country, such deplorable acts by self-imposed moral guardians in which any form of morality has long fled.

This report does not make any assertions as to who is a Muslim or not. This is not the role of Faith Matters. Our report looks at the basic human rights of a faith community that has faced persecution, hatred, and vitriol. This must be challenged. In the West, we cannot feel self-congratulatory when we speak about human rights and ignore certain communities since 'the issue may be too complex' or 'that it is an internal dispute.' This does not wash any longer. Human rights do not come in a 'pick and mix' variety.

We provide a short perspective of the history of activities in the UK, United States, Indonesia and Pakistan and within these contexts, we highlight some of the influences that Ahmadis have had on historical figures in these countries. We highlight how Ahmadis restored one of the oldest and most historical of mosques in Woking, how they became active citizens at a time when Britain still held an empire and how they utilised debate, dialogue, and persuasion to build a space for them in this country. In many instances, Ahmadis are a success story of integration, whilst also retaining their fierce independence and their phenomenal social activism which has helped many across the globe.

We hope that this report inspires others to look further into the area of sectarianism and the impacts that it has both in the UK and globally. Sectarianism is not having a major impact on our country; but it is affecting the Ahmadi community. With better knowledge we can start to bridge these divides. More work needs to be done in this area to challenge sectarianism, hate, and extremism.

Lastly, we dedicate this report to the memory of the much loved Glaswegian shopkeeper Asad Shah. His words brought together communities and people from all backgrounds. If anything, that example alone showed that he mattered and that his presence will not be forgotten.



Fiyaz Mughal OBE FCMI,
Founder and Director – Faith Matters

Executive summary

Faith Matters is a not-for-profit organisation which works to challenge hate crimes, reduce extremism, and promote cohesion domestically and internationally. We believe that freedom of religion is a key part of any democratic society. This report contextualises the historical and modern drivers of sectarianism against Ahmadi communities domestically and internationally. Yet, this problem should not undermine the many examples of cohesion and tolerance. Nor should it undermine the contributions of Ahmadi missionaries across the world.

The violence against Ahmadis is a product of a wider extremist narrative which exploits the sensitivities around the blasphemy debate in Islam. It seeks to define Islam through its own narrow interpretations. This report hopes to challenge prevailing narratives and existing stereotypes about the Ahmadi community. Where there is disagreement, we ask for dialogue, not violence or hate. Standing up for the rights of all religious minorities is consistent with the mission and principles of Faith Matters.

A project of Faith Matters, Tell MAMA (Measuring anti-Muslim Attacks), which launched in 2012, and serves as a confidential support service for individuals who experience hatred, violence and discrimination due to their Islamic identity. The project publishes groundbreaking yearly reports on anti-Muslim hate crime trends. Tell MAMA also records incidents of intra-Muslim incidents.

- Tell MAMA documented 29 anti-Ahmadi incidents in 2016 (as of July 1) which demonstrates a stark rise from the nine incidents reported in 2015.
- The murder of Asad Shah intensified media interest in Ahmadi communities. Incidents reported to Tell MAMA after Shah's murder were street-based and online.
- The personality cult around Tanveer Ahmed is a disturbing trend. This includes social media posts praising his actions. His supporters glorify Ahmed as an 'authentic' defender of the Islamic faith.
- Supporters of Tanveer Ahmed view him as continuing the work of Mumtaz Qadri – the man who was executed for the 2011 murder of Pakistani politician Salman Taseer.
- Seeking to redefine Islam through a narrow, interpretative lens allows fundamentalists to dictate the narrative and exclude others (be they Ahmadi or Shia) as 'outside' of Islam helps normalise banal, everyday forms of prejudice, including the decision to boycott Ahmadi-run businesses.
- Some of the earliest Ahmadi missionaries to enter the United States offered a message to black converts that opened them up to new horizons of Islamic teaching. In fact, one of Malcolm X's first encounters with Islamic teachings was through an Ahmadi missionary.
- Ahmadi missionaries in England helped restore or create some of the earliest registered places of worship for Muslims.
- Some of the key drivers towards anti-Ahmadi legislation in Pakistan and Indonesia reflect the failures of successive governments when faced with the violent demands of the religious right.
- Anti-Ahmadi prejudice on social media continues to be a problem which Faith Matters has raised with Facebook. This creates the platform to normalise hate speech against a religious minority and must be challenged.

The murder of Asad Shah

On March 25, 2016, the murder of a popular Ahmadi newsagent dominated media coverage in Britain. Asad Shah, the forty-year-old owner of Shah's Newsagents had been attacked inside and outside of his shop. An eyewitness raised the alarm at 9:10pm on March 24. He told the Daily Record that an individual had stamped on Mr Shah's head on multiple occasions. Asad Shah died from his injuries at Queen Elizabeth University Hospital some hours later.¹

By Friday afternoon, police had arrested a 32-year-old Muslim man in connection with Shah's death. A spokeswoman added that Police Scotland were treating the death as 'religiously prejudiced'.² Tanveer Ahmed, from Toller in Bradford, later appeared in private at a Glasgow court. The 32-year-old did not enter a plea, and was remanded in custody.³ Tributes to Shah circulated within hours of his death. Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon tweeted: "My heart goes out to the family of Asad Shah, a popular shopkeeper in my constituency. My thoughts are with them."⁴ Sturgeon then attended a large public vigil in Glasgow on March 25.⁵ Surviving family members raised fears of further sectarian violence. ⁶ The hashtag **#thisisnothoweare** became a means to express grief, shock and solidarity. An extension of the latter came through public donations to the Shah family. This crowdfunding effort had raised more than £110,000 by April 6.⁷ Newspaper headlines for the weekend editions captured this public grief. The Daily Mail's front page ran with the headline 'Murderer of a Man of Peace' a day after the public vigil.

Hours before his murder, Shah had posted online: "Good Friday and a very Happy Easter, especially to my beloved Christian nation. Let's follow the real footsteps of beloved holy Jesus Christ and get the real success in both worlds". Speculation grew that his murder was somehow tied to this statement. Yet, this sort of statement was not unusual. On March 17, 2016, Mr Shah wrote: "BISMILLAH....., Very Happy Saint Patrick's Day - Follow The Saints And Get The Purpose Of Life - Have A Full Of Blessing Day - Very Happy Saint Patrick's Day". Other social media posts spoke of his 'ultimate and unconditional love for all beloved mankind'.

The man accused Shah's murder issued a statement on April 6 saying he carried out the killing because Shah had 'disrespected' Islam.⁸ This unusual statement was made through his lawyer, John Rafferty, after his client had made his second court appearance before sheriff Brian Adair.

The statement ended:

I wish to make it clear that the incident was nothing at all to do with Christianity or any other religious beliefs even although I am a follower of the Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him I also love and respect Jesus Christ.⁹

The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), a leading Muslim umbrella group, clarified its stance on the Ahmadi community on April 6.

We affirm the right of Ahmadis to their freedom of belief and reject any attacks on their property or persons. They have the right to live free from discrimination or persecution. The targeting of Ahmadis for their beliefs is totally unacceptable.

The Muslim Council of Britain reflects the clear theological position expressed across Islamic traditions: namely that the cornerstone of Islam is to believe in One God and in the finality of the prophethood of the Messenger Muhammad, peace be upon him. We understand that this is not a tenet subscribed to by the Ahmadi community. The MCB Constitution requires our affiliates to declare that Messenger Muhammad peace

be upon him is the final prophet and whoever does not subscribe to that declaration cannot be eligible for affiliation with the MCB. Given this fundamental theological difference with the Ahmadi community, the MCB is not in a position to represent or be represented by the Ahmadi community.

Despite our clear theological beliefs, we note that pressure is mounting to describe this community as Muslim. Muslims should not be forced to class Ahmadis as Muslims if they do not wish to do so, at the same time, we call on Muslims to be sensitive, and above all, respect all people irrespective of belief or background.¹⁰

Having previously condemned Shah's murder on March 26, this clarification created a measure of controversy.¹¹ A press release from the Ahmadi community praised and criticised the MCB's position. It argued that Ahmadis should be able to self-define as Muslim.¹² The World Head of the Ahmadiyya community, the Fifth Khalifa (Caliph), Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad later said that Shah was martyred for his beliefs:

Asad Shah was martyred due to the actions of those who wish to spread hate and disorder. He was killed due to his religious beliefs as an Ahmadi Muslim and so achieved the status of a martyr. Surely to Allah we belong and to Him shall we return¹³

On August 9, Tanveer Ahmed received a life sentence with a minimum term of 27 years. In her sentencing remarks at the High Court in Glasgow, Lady Rae described how Ahmed had carried out in 'effect an execution'.¹⁴ Ahmed had not just stabbed Shah multiple times. He had dragged his body outside then repeatedly kicked, stamped and punched his head and neck. The injuries to Shah's neck and head were consistent with road accident victims.

Lady Rae told Ahmed: "Your determination to kill Mr Shah was obvious. What is so chilling is that what you did was calculated and deliberate. You did not know the deceased but you decided that you had a duty to kill him".¹⁵

Ahmed singled out Shah due to his claims of prophethood he made on social media. He originally confronted Shah over the phone, then drove to Glasgow to threaten him in person. Ahmed watched a video from Shah's YouTube account and was heard saying over the phone: "Listen to this guy, something needs to be done, it needs nipped in the bud." After arriving at Shah's convenience store, Ahmed threatened to murder Shah if he failed to renounce this claim.¹⁶

Lady Rae highlighted Ahmed's perverse sense of pride. She added: "It is accepted by you in the agreed narrative that this was a religiously motivated crime, although it was not directed towards the Ahmadi community."¹⁷

From a legal standpoint, however, it did not meet the threshold for the offence to be aggravated by religious prejudice. Had it done so, Ahmed would have received a longer minimum sentence. Section 76 of the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2003 states that an offence is aggravated by religious prejudice if:

at the time of committing the offence or immediately before or after doing so, the offender evinces towards the victim (if any) of the offence malice and ill-will based on the victim's membership (or presumed membership) of a religious group, or of a social or cultural group with a perceived religious affiliation; or the offence is motivated (wholly or partly) by malice and ill-will towards members of a religious group, or of a social or cultural group with a perceived religious affiliation, based on their membership of that group.¹⁸

Lord Advocate James Wolffe QC then wrote to the Justice Secretary to highlight a “potential gap” in the current legislation. ¹⁹

Ahmed remained proud and defiant until the trial concluded. When escorted from the dock, he raised his fist and shouted in Arabic: “Praise for the Prophet Muhammad, there is only one Prophet.” Some supporters echoed this statement in the public gallery. ²⁰ Friends or extended family members of the Ahmed family refused to condemn Shah's murder. Some claimed that Ahmed was motivated to murder Shah due to recent events in Pakistan. According to friends, Ahmed would preach about those he perceived as 'blasphemous'. ²¹

Tanveer Ahmed emulated his idol Mumtaz Qadri, who had murdered the politician Salman Taseer for trying to reform Pakistan's controversial blasphemy laws in 2011. Qadri had trained as an elite police commando and was assigned as Taseer's bodyguard. He claimed it was his religious duty to murder Taseer. ²² His legal team argued that the killing was not unlawful because “he killed an apostate who insulted the prophet”. ²³ Qadri was later executed in February 2016. ²⁴ Mumtaz Qadri maintains a cult-like status among sections of Pakistani society. A pro-Qadri protest in Islamabad attracted around 2,000 supporters last March. ²⁵ It would then emerge that Tanveer Ahmed had written letters to Qadri as he awaited execution. Ahmed later called Qadri's brother to boast about murdering Asad Shah. ²⁶

The Home Office came in for criticism recently as it emerged that two Pakistani clerics who praised Qadri were able to tour the UK. According to the Scottish Daily Record, Haseeb ur Rehman had posted on social media: “Every person who loves Islam and Prophet is in grief for the martyrdom of Mumtaz Qadri.” Both spoke at a Glasgow mosque on the day of Ahmed's sentencing. ²⁷ Humza Yousaf MSP condemned the event. He told the Daily Record: “No mosque should give a platform to anybody who expresses sympathies with the likes of Qadri.” ²⁸

Concerns about pro-Qadri sentiment from religious figures made news elsewhere. In May, Wycombe Islamic Mission and Trust began an investigation after claims that local imams had praised Mumtaz Qadri. ²⁹ The whistleblower, Khalil Ahmed, 55, had received death threats if he were to visit Pakistan. ³⁰ In September, the investigation ended and cleared the three imams of hate preaching and glorifying terrorists. When interviewed, all three imams admitted referring to Qadri as a martyr, one of the imams had allegedly said that Qadri was ‘unjustly’ hung. ³¹

A former imam, Qari Mahmood, 38, based in East London, had praised the “martyrdom” of Mumtaz Qadri last April. The video later appeared on the online channel Zara Sochoo. This popular channel, run by Mahmood's friend Khalid Iqbal Malik, reaches thousands of followers. Mahmood told an Evening Standard journalist that his views on Qadri were “misrepresented”. Khalid Iqbal Malik also made efforts to disassociate himself from violence and Qadri. One of the imams at their local mosque, said their comments were “against Islam”. ³²

Allegations that a mosque leader at Glasgow Central Mosque had praised Qadri made headlines. ³³ Members of the Jamia Islamia Ghouseia Trust had praised Mumtaz Qadri on Facebook on March 1, 2016. ³⁴ On March 27, 2016, media personality Mohammed Shafiq, was confronted by a small number of worshippers at a Birmingham mosque due to his anti-Qadri views. ³⁵ Weeks earlier, one of the largest mosques in Birmingham had described Qadri as “a martyr”. This extended to influential preachers in Bradford and Dewsbury. ³⁶ The Association of British Muslims condemned the actions. ³⁷

Tanveer Ahmed's unrepentant stance gained him a devoted audience. Social media pages and YouTube videos continue to praise his actions. A minority of Twitter users based abroad used the hashtag **#GhaziTanveer** to glorify his crimes. ³⁸ Ghazi is an Arabic term used to

honour Muslim warriors who were victorious in battle against the opponents of Islam.³⁹ On Facebook, the page 'Ghazi Tanveer Ahmed Qadiri' gained 7,000 'likes' before Facebook removed the page.⁴⁰ Similar pages, however, remain on the platform. On YouTube, tribute videos to Ahmed have gained thousands of views. One particular video, uploaded by the account BrailveeOnline, posited his actions as a continuation of the work of Qadri.

In a phone call published on YouTube, Ahmed said, while in prison, that he has no regrets. The transcript read:

To all Muslims, to the righteous, all Sunnis and all righteous scholars: I declare this on oath. The action, which I have taken, I have done to guard the honour of the Prophet.

With reference to this, I have no regrets. I have sent a sinner to hell, a bad person to hell. I do not have any sympathy for his family or for him, nor do I have any regrets.⁴¹

The Shah family lost a devoted son, father and brother. This recurring heartbreak has caused them to consider leaving Scotland. According to the Guardian, the Shah family were upset with the local Ahmadi leadership using the murder for 'political gain'. Family sources also claim they were not consulted about an Ahmadi press conference following Ahmed's conviction.⁴² Tanveer Ahmed's intention to appeal his conviction will only cause the family more unnecessary pain.⁴³

Shah's murder sparked a debate about sectarianism in the UK. It was a murder motivated by religious hatred; but the court accepted that it was not anti-Ahmadi in nature. Tanveer Ahmed, however, used the term 'Qadiani' in a pejorative context.⁴⁴

It stands to reason that the murder of Asad Shah generated renewed interest in Ahmadi communities. And in a worrying sense, intensified, or at least drew greater attention to existing prejudices and tensions. Days after Shah's murder, anti-Ahmadi leaflets had allegedly appeared in London.⁴⁵ Handfuls of the flyers, which argue that Ahmadis should face death if they refuse to convert to mainstream Islam were found in Stockwell Green Mosque, in south London. The leaflets were credited to a former head of Khatme Nubuwwat, which lists the mosque as its overseas office. Years earlier, the mosque had faced similar allegations.⁴⁶ A trustee of the mosque, Toaha Qureshi, had originally told the BBC in 2011 that: "We are very angry and furious about that. We do not have any linkage with this organisation that is promoting hate".⁴⁷ He added: "We have not published any pamphlet of that kind. This is nothing to do with our mosque. Someone might have put it there and taken from there with malicious intentions".⁴⁸

The leaflets define Ahmadis as apostates (*Murtad*) and dualist-infidels (*Zindiqs*). The text also prohibits interactions with Ahmadi communities. It goes on to describe them as 'liars' who have established a 'colony' in London. Yet the flyer goes beyond calling for the death of apostates. As dualist-infidels, or *Zindiqs* under Sharia Law, Ahmadi communities have allegedly committed 'never-ending' crimes. The Khatme Nubuwwat group attempts to caveat its argument for capital punishment against apostates under a speculative or established Islamic state. It also calls on supporters to engage in economic and social boycotts of Ahmadi communities. The politics of boycotts have a storied history in Pakistan, Indonesia and parts of Britain. Before Shah's murder, the most significant and public examples of sectarianism towards Ahmadis took place in south London in 2010.

On October 14, 2010, worshippers at Tooting Islamic Centre (TIC) were told to boycott Ahmadi shops.⁴⁹ Imam Suliman Gani had pleaded with an owner of a local halal butcher's not to sell his business to an Ahmadi man. Gani had told worshippers: "Since the Qadianis are routinely deceptive about their religion, there was a potential risk of Muslims being offered meat that

wasn't necessarily halal".⁵⁰ A leaflet which called for the boycott of an Ahmadi-run shop then appeared in Streatham mosque.

Staff at Sabina Hair and Cosmetic shop in Tooting had allegedly displayed a sectarian leaflet. When confronted by a journalist, a member of staff said: "These people are not Muslims. I did it myself. They don't believe that prophet Mohammed is the last prophet." The alleged source of this leaflet was Khatme Nubuwwat.⁵¹ At the same time, in a different part of London, anti-Ahmadi leaflets were allegedly distributed. A Freedom of Information request a year later confirmed that police had not found CCTV evidence of the incident. Nor did they possess copies of the leaflets. But it did not stop the police from encouraging witnesses to come forward.⁵²

Discrimination against an Ahmadi man had resulted in an employment tribunal. Mr Majeed, an Ahmadi, faced pressure from his Sunni employer, Azizur Rahman, owner of Haji Halal Meat, to convert to mainstream Islam. Mr Rahman had made it a condition of employment that Mr Majeed convert. When he did not, he lost his job.⁵³ During the tribunal, Mr Majeed's employer had invited him to a conference held at the TIC on March 28, 2010, to "learn the real truth" about Islam. During that conference, a speaker had allegedly said, "Don't make friends with them... they are trying to deceive you, they are trying to convert you from Islam to Qadianism".⁵⁴ It emerged that his employer had faced external pressure to fire Mr Majeed. The tribunal, however, ruled in favour of Mr Majeed, awarding him lost revenue.⁵⁵

The Wimbledon Guardian later revealed how anti-Ahmadi protesters had attempted to disrupt an elections husting at the TIC on April 14, 2010.⁵⁶ Khatme Nubuwwat had influenced much of the anti-Ahmadi sentiment thus far; but it would not define it. As Siobhan McDonagh MP noted: "The real story about anti-Ahmadi activities in this country may be more complicated and untypical".⁵⁷ Dr James Coran, from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, told the BBC that: "Anti-Ahmadi sentiment is much larger than the Khatme Nabuwwat movement."⁵⁸ For example, Ofcom had reprimanded the Ummah Channel for calling the sect "Wajib-ul Qatal" in 2010. This Arabic term translates as "liable for death". And concerns those accused of 'digressing' from mainstream Islam.⁵⁹ Ofcom would later reprimand the Urdu-language channel Takbeer TV in 2011 after a religious show had "incited violence" against Ahmadis.⁶⁰ In 2013, Takbeer TV received a £25,000 fine from Ofcom due to the anti-Ahmadi content found in two programmes dedicated to Khatme Nabuwwat. In one of the programmes featured, panellists and callers made derogatory remarks about Ahmadis. This included comparing their faith to "piles" and that Ahmadis required "operating on ... without... anaesthesia".⁶¹

In 2014, the Luton on Sunday newspaper published an advert promoting the Ahmadi community's 125th anniversary. Complaints from a minority of Muslims saw the newspaper 'disassociate' itself from the adverts.⁶²

The activist Sadaf Ahmed has recently launched a petition which calls on the government to investigate the activities of Khatme Nubuwwat. She contends that the group's speakers enter Britain freely and spread anti-Ahmadi hate.⁶³ Last May, Hanif Qureshi, who has made anti-Ahmadi statements in the past, spoke at a Luton mosque.⁶⁴

The phraseology directed towards Ahmadi communities often carries negative connotations. The terms Qadiani or Qadianism allude to the historic roots of the movement. Yet this language functions in a manner which seeks to externalise the community as a homogeneous entity distinct from mainstream Islam.

The following sections will offer a short history of the Ahmadi movement in colonial India. It explores the idea of its founder Mirza Ghulam Ahmad who died in 1908. A later section

concerns the missionary work of Ahmadis in the early twentieth century - with a selective, review of the influence of Ahmadi missionaries in the United States and England. This section explores how the missionary work of Ahmadis offered distinct visions of Islam for black and white converts in both countries.

Some of the earliest Ahmadi missionaries who entered the United States offered a radical, transformative and post-colonial message. The thrust of this message targeted black communities facing the violent and persistent trauma of racism. They spoke of an Islamic universalism which was pan-African in nature despite its South Asian origin. It could challenge the racism which churches had failed to address. Ahmadis presented Islam in a progressive, humane, and compassionate light. This stood in contrast to the misrepresentations of Islam found in wider society. Ahmadi magazines became the counterpoint in challenging negative media stories on both sides of the Atlantic.⁶⁵

One the most radical missionaries to enter the United States was Muhammad Sadiq - who had close links to Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Notable UNIA members included Elijah Muhammad and Noble Drew Ali. The former would go onto become a crucial member of the National of Islam. And the latter founded the Moorish Science Temple, one of the first Black Muslim congregations in the United States in the 20th century. Ahmadi missionaries also brought transliterations of the Qur'an and Islamic texts in the English language. The diversity of Ahmadi missionary work even reached the ears of Malcolm X when he was incarcerated in Norfolk Prison.

In England, on the other hand, Ahmadi missionaries helped established some of its earliest registered mosques. If Abdullah Quilliam helped shape the role of Islam in 19th century England, it is fair to say that Ahmadis helped shape the position of Islam in the early part of twentieth century. For English converts, a large number came from the white middle-classes. Many found in Islam a respite from the fatigue of Christian sectarianism. The reverence Islam holds towards Jesus as a prophet helped many in their religious transition. Some white converts embraced Islam in response to the toxic chauvinism of racism. During religious holidays, these mosques, in London and Woking, hosted dignitaries from the Ottoman Empire and Saudi Arabia. One important and distinguished guest was Muhammad Jinnah (d. 1948) - the visionary founder of Pakistan.

A later section on Pakistan explores the sectarian dimension of anti-Ahmadi violence and discrimination. Sectarian violence is not monocausal; as it draws from a wellspring of geopolitical, political and social factors.⁶⁶ The peculiarities of sectarianism in Pakistan speak to its own history. Religious fundamentalists often targeted Ahmadi communities partly out of fear of declining political influence. This strain of fundamentalism, as the theologian Karen Armstrong argued, begins as a defensive measure in response to the perceived encroachment of secular society or their coreligionists. It adopts the language of nationalism or ethnicity through the lens of religion in an effort to reshape how the state defines Muslim citizenship.⁶⁷ Perhaps the most successful example of this change occurred under the militarily dictatorship of General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq between 1978 and 1988. His policy of Islamification disadvantaged religious minorities and privileged Sunni orthodoxy. It also intensified existing sectarian tensions. Nor can we discount how the secular government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto flirted with Islamification when politically expedient. Sectarianism in Pakistan remains a modern problem. But religious institutions impart an older variation of sectarianism.⁶⁸ Others have argued that the sectarian problems in Pakistan are a 'Punjabi' phenomenon.⁶⁹ This argument pertains to the anti-Shia sectarianism which grew under the Zia-ul-Haq regime in the 1980s. Part of this issue concerns the role of poorly educated Sunni labourers working under Shia landlords in the Punjab district.⁷⁰

In a curious parallel, religious fundamentalists used similar methods to curtail the religious freedoms of Ahmadis in Indonesia. Nor would it be fair to frame anti-Ahmadi sentiment as a product of theological difference. It also concerns perceived cultural difference. A false perception that Ahmadis refuse to assimilate resulted in many losing their homes in villages across Indonesia. Once the fundamentalists had achieved legislation against Ahmadis, it impacted Shia communities.

The origins of the Ahmadi movement

This section looks at the life the founder of the Ahmadi movement, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, born in 1835. It will explore his ideas and what emerged after his death in 1908. Our position is not scholarly, so this section will offer an overview, drawing from existing research. Theological disputes existed in Ahmad's lifetime. Yet, the politics of anti-Ahmadi violence will feature in later sections on Pakistan and Indonesia.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad founded the movement in 1889, in the Punjab region of colonial India. Under British rule, any theological controversies were between private citizens or voluntary organisations.⁷¹ But with partition, and the birth of the Pakistani nation state, came deeper and more fundamental questions about the role of religion and the state – and how fundamentalists lobbied, sometimes violently, for the exclusion of Ahmadis. This messianic movement claimed that Ghulam Ahmad was the 'spiritual renewer' of Islam. He also considered himself the Messiah for Christians. His messianic claims extended to the Hindu faith, as Ghulam Ahmad claimed he was Kalki, the promised tenth incarnation of the deity Vishnu.⁷² The ulama, or Islamic body of India at the time, considered Ahmad's views 'heretical'. A fatwa accused him of 'manipulating the Qur'an and the hadith for his own benefit'.⁷³ The traditional view among Muslims is that the Prophet Muhammad was the final prophet sent to Earth by God; and he alone holds the seal of prophethood. To suggest otherwise invites accusations of blasphemy. Yet Ghulam Ahmad maintained that he was a "non-legislating" prophet, not in opposition to the finality of the prophet Muhammad.⁷⁴ Others argue that the Ahmadi:

believe firmly, fervently, without any ambiguity or reservation, and with all their heart and soul" that Muhammad "was and will ever remain the greatest Prophet of all times – past, present and future – and his Sharia'h [Law] will remain unaltered and the guiding code and law for mankind till Doomsday."⁷⁵

But consensus among Ahmadis to the status of their founder remains diverse. After Ahmad's death in 1908, the movement split into two factions. The Qadiani faction, headed by Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya, which now resides in London after moving from the city of Rabwah in Pakistan, believes in the 'non-legislative' divinity of Ghulam Ahmad. Lahori Ahmadis, or Lahori Jammāt due to their Lahore location, agree that Ahmad was the promised Messiah and Mujaddid (reformer), but reject the notion that he was a prophet. This diversity of thought, however, is often overlooked. Ahmadis are often spoken of in homogeneous terms - either Mirzas (followers of Mirza) or Qadianis. During Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's lifetime, he was, for a time, a respected polemicist, known for his defence of Islam against extremist Hindus and Christian missionaries.⁷⁶ The transition from respected polemicist to 'pariah' was gradual. His dense and prolific body of writings preceded his own perceived spiritual transition. Some Ahmadis believe that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad would bring about a "renaissance of Islam".⁷⁷

A collection of his writings show the influence of Sufi Mystic Ibn al-Arabi (1165-1240).⁷⁸ As Yohanan Friedmann noted: "We can thus say that the essential elements of Ghulam Ahmad's prophetology were not unknown among medieval Sufi thinkers."⁷⁹ Others contend that the writings and theology of Ghulam Ahmad were a response to colonialism. A proximity to Christian missionaries inspired a departure from traditional Islamic thought. He argued that Jesus led a mortal life, having survived crucifixion, and fled persecution by settling in Kashmir. Arguably, his interactions with Christians inspired him to mirror the missionary work of the Christians he debated.⁸⁰

To assert the superiority of Islam in debate, Ahmad sought to undermine the very foundation of Christian thought.⁸¹ How Jesus came to be buried in Kashmir was expanded upon in

Ghulam Khan's treatise *Jesus in India*, published after his death in 1908.⁸² In spite of this difference of belief, Ghulam Ahmad maintained a deep love and reverence for Jesus. During his lifetime, he wrote that:

We inform our readers that our belief concerning Jesus is extremely noble. We most sincerely believe that he was a true prophet of Allah, and He loved him. As the Holy Qur'an tells us, we hold firm faith that he most sincerely believed in our lord and master prophet Muhammad Mustafa (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) for his salvation, and that he was one of the hundreds of obedient servants of the Law of Moses. Therefore, we hold a great esteem for him in accordance with his exalted status.⁸³

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's theological ideas have faced decades of reinterpretation, applying an analytical framework to his ideas somewhat misses the point, as Ahmad's somewhat ambiguous and paradoxical claims were intended to assert his role in the world.⁸⁴ One interpretation of Ghulam Ahmad's writings contends that he did recognise the Prophet Muhammad's 'seal of Prophethood'.⁸⁵ During Ghulam Ahmad's lifetime, his interactions and exposure to Christian and Muslim thinkers had a profound impact on his religious career. Two high profile inspirations were Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817 - 1929) and the Sufi thinker Maulvi Mahbub 'Alam. But some have tried to downplay 'Alam's influence on Ahmad.⁸⁶

At the turn of the century effective Christian missions and the decline of Muslim rule had led many Muslims in the Punjab to reject their faith or convert. In response, Ghulam Ahmad wrote *The Proofs of Islam*. Donations from wealthy Muslims helped Ahmad publish the book. One such donor was Nawab Shah Jahan (d. 1901), who had ruled the colonial region of Bhopal. She later funded the renovations of Woking Mosque in England. This mosque is an important part of the chapter concerning the origins of the Ahmadi in England. Ahmad's book had limited reach outside of India but it cemented his appeal among a small circle of intellectuals.⁸⁷

As Simon Valentine noted, the Ahmadi believe in the five pillars of Islam, and of "Amal, deeds and practise". A majority of Muslims, however, reject the 'offensive' Ahmadi teachings regarding prophethood, Jihad, Jesus and the Khalifat.⁸⁸ Some believed that Ghulam Ahmad spoke of his own prophethood in metaphorical terms. This belief was a factor in the Ahmadi movement splitting following the death of Ahmad's successor in 1914. Ghulam Ahmad's son, Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mehmud (1889-1965), would led the Qadiani group. This split left a lasting and bitter impression on both groups.⁸⁹

Ahmadi missionaries in the United States

As a missionary movement, Ahmadis soon appeared in the United States, Britain, Europe, Indonesia and Nigeria. The story of Islam in the United States is intrinsically tied to slavery. Some estimates put the figure at 15 to 30 percent, or, 600,000 to 1.2 million slaves were Muslim.⁹⁰ Others estimate that the figure was 10 per cent.⁹¹

Muhammad Sadiq, who arrived in Philadelphia on February 15, 1920, was one of the first Ahmadi missionaries to enter the United States. A year later, with the help of other Muslims, Sadiq had launched the monthly periodical *The Muslim Sunrise* to challenge negative stereotypes about Islam in the press.

Sadiq used the *Muslim Sunrise* to argue that Islam could resolve the racism Christianity had failed to answer. He contended that Islam and the Arabic language would unite all people of African descent. This post-colonial message came at a time of great social discontent and racist violence. Sadiq sought to align himself with Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Garvey's charisma and intellect offered a transformative solution to black dispossession, colonial domination and racism.⁹² *The Muslim Sunrise* aligned its message with the UNIA. An article which appeared in a 1923 edition of the *Muslim Sunrise* argued that:

Apart from confederation of the African tribes or peoples of African origin, the possibility of which is a nightmare to the white man, he lives in fear and trembling that El Islam may become the religion of the Negro. And why should it not be? 'El Islam' would be a wonderful spiritual force in the life of the colored races, uniting us in a bond of common sympathy and interest. We could then add to our motto of one God, one aim, one destiny, the words one language which would be arabic. It could easily be made the universal language of Negroes and would remove the barriers which now face us in the intercommunication of the different tribes in Africa. Arabic is already spoken by millions of Negroes.⁹³

Another example of this rhetoric appeared in the previous volume of the magazine.

My dear American Negro - Assalam-o-Alaikum. Peace be with you and the mercy of Allah. The Christian profiteers brought you out of your native lands of Africa and in Christianizing you made you forget the religion and language of your forefathers - which were Islam and Arabic. You have experienced Christianity for so many years and it has proved to be no good. It is a failure. Christianity cannot bring real brotherhood to the nations. So, now leave it alone. And join Islam, the real faith of Universal Brotherhood.⁹⁴

Under Sadiq's editorship, this pan-Africanism was part of a wider strategy to recruit members of Garvey's UNIA. At the same time, Ahmadi missionaries settled in Nigeria, the Ivory Coast and Ghana.⁹⁵

The magazine also served as a means to proselytise non-Muslims with articles that addressed the fundamental tenets of the Islamic faith. Readers could learn Arabic and understand Quranic verses through transliterations in English. Short articles would challenge incorrect stories about Islam in mainstream newspapers. Others could learn how and when to pray; or read extracts of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's theology. The magazine also listed the names of converts and their testimonials.

Financial troubles, however, forced the *Muslim Sunrise* to cease production from 1924 to 1930. This occurred at the same time as the decline of the UNIA with Garvey's deportation.⁹⁶

Disillusioned and embittered by the racism he encountered in the United States, Muhammad Sadiq returned to India in 1923. According to a letter published in the *New York Times* in 1993, he had attracted a large number of black converts during his short stint in the United States. This was particularly true in Detroit and Chicago between 1922 and 1923.⁹⁷ *The Muslim Sunrise* also highlighted the successes of its black missionaries. In 1922, it featured Sheik Ahmad Din (P. Nathaniel Johnson) who worked as a missionary in St. Louis, Missouri. Local press reported that Din had converted around 100 people in the first six months of his mission in the St. Louis area.⁹⁸ Photos of black female converts often highlighted their religious commitment to Islam. Some wore traditional veils and covered their arms to define themselves in opposition to white culture.⁹⁹ The stories of other historical famous black Muslims appeared in the magazine. One example was Bilal ibn Rabah (580-640 AD). He was a slave freed by the Prophet Muhammad, and became Islam's first *muezzin* – a person who issues the call to pray (adhan) five times a day.¹⁰⁰ This gave a historic link between Islam and Africa. For black converts it offered "an alternative universal history to which to pledge allegiance".¹⁰¹ Some of the earliest independent black mosques took inspiration from Ahmadi teachings. The first mosque in Cleveland was later established by the former Ahmadi Wali Akram.¹⁰² Some black converts established their own mosques to accommodate the growing black consciousness and scholarship around Islam.¹⁰³ Before the rise of the Nation of Islam (NOI), Ahmadi missionaries offered "the first multi-racial model for American Islam".¹⁰⁴ This influence, according to the academic Edward C. Curtis, reached Elijah Muhammad, a religious leader in the NOI, who had "regularly quoted, verbatim, from Ahmadi literature, including Ahmadi translations of the Qur'an".¹⁰⁵ Ahmadi missionaries had converted around 10,000 people by the 1940s.¹⁰⁶

It was during this period of history that cities like Boston would prove important cultural hubs for black converts. Some embraced Islam due to the missionary work of the Ahmadis.¹⁰⁷ Ahmadi missionaries had to compete with Nation of Islam missionaries for converts in Boston. Both offered competing visions of a 'practical' and 'spiritual' interpretations of Islam in the political sphere.¹⁰⁸ Yet, this message of universalism felt hollow to some black converts when they were unable to lead missions, causing some to leave or reject the sect. Another factor was cultural – South Asian missionaries brought their own colonial baggage and insisted that others follow Indian customs. Others moved away due to theological differences.¹⁰⁹ In spite of the rise of the Nation of Islam, the Ahmadis maintained support among black communities in the 1930s and 1940s. The language of internationalist, pan-Islamic resistance to Western imperialism was toned down. Yet it never lost the message of multi-racial religious unity, which fused Indian nationalism with pan-Africanism.¹¹⁰

In the state of Massachusetts, a local Ahmadi missionary named Abdul Hameed tutored Malcolm X and Malcolm "Shorty" Jarvis about Islam. Jarvis wrote in his memoirs that Hameed was "instrumental in both Malcolm's and my life".¹¹¹ Though he would acknowledge the later influence of Elijah Muhammad over Malcolm, Jarvis stated that: "It was Abdul Hameed who presented us our first mention of Islam - his point of view being based on the Ahmadiyyan movement originating in India."¹¹² Hameed made multiple visits to Jarvis in Norfolk prison between 1949 and 1950. In 1947, he gifted both men prayer books written in Arabic.¹¹³ In his autobiography, Malcolm X minimised the influence of Hameed, describing him as a "member of the orthodox Muslim movement in Boston" who had taught him to memorise Arabic prayers phonetically.¹¹⁴

The creation of Pakistan in 1947 shifted the attention of the Ahmadi mission in the United States. The post-partition violence had seen thousands of Muslims disappear in East Punjab as millions sought refuge in Pakistan. ¹¹⁵Yet the story of Ahmadis in the United States never faded away. In Chicago, there remain examples of black-run Ahmadi places of worship today.¹¹⁶

Ahmadi missionaries in England

Seldom does a discussion about Islam in Britain exclude William Henry Quilliam (1856-1932).¹¹⁷ The story of Islam in England, however, dates back to Elizabethan times. But the English language did not recognise the existence of the words Islam or Muslim until the seventeenth century. Colonialism saw the British Empire recruit Muslim sailors. Yemenis made up some of the oldest settled Muslim communities in Cardiff, who arrived in the late nineteenth century.¹¹⁸ Sailors from Somalia arrived in maritime ports like Cardiff after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 in search of work.¹¹⁹ The city of Cardiff was home to the first registered mosque. Some academics, however, have disputed this claim.¹²⁰

Quilliam's Muslim Institute in Liverpool did serve as a mosque and educational hub and was officially registered on December 25, 1889. Expansion meant that local Muslims had access to a library, a printing press, a museum, schools for boys and girls, a hostel and a literary society. It served their everyday needs. Yet some locals objected. On November 28, 1891, an article in the *Liverpool Review* read '[I]t is not the private and inoffensive worship of Mohammed that is objectionable, but the public advertisement of him'.¹²¹ The mosque proved a roaring success until Quilliam's departure in 1908 - where it fell into disrepair and closure.

The British Orientalist Dr Gottlieb Wilhelm Leitner, a Jewish academic, who founded Woking's Oriental Institute helped establish England's first purpose-built mosque in 1889. It fell into disrepair following Leitner's death in 1899.¹²² Begum Shah Jahan, the Nawab Begum of the state of Bhopal, had donated to Leitner's institute.¹²³

At the turn of the twentieth century, Muslims in Britain totalled around 10,000. Some of England's earliest mosque were funded by, or restored by, both Ahmadi movements. But their missionary work also downplayed theological differences and beliefs.¹²⁴ The arrival of Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, an Ahmadi, in 1912, changed the fortunes of Woking Mosque. His arrival concerned a civil case before the Privy Council in London, which at the time, served as the highest court of appeal for Indian cases. He also used his legal platform to challenge negative stereotypes about Islam and Muslims.¹²⁵ Kamal-ud-Din made his first visit to Woking mosque in January 1913. While inside, it's said that he had spotted a copy of the Qur'an in corner, and felt inspired to restore the mosque.¹²⁶ Leitner's son, however, was negotiating the sale of the mosque to a developer. So Kamal-ud-Din took the issue to the courts. He convinced the courts that a mosque should enjoy the same legal rights as a church. This legal victory allowed him to purchase the mosque and its grounds for a nominal fee.¹²⁷ In the summer of 1913, two prominent Indian Muslims Sir Abbas Ali Baig and the Right Honourable Syed Ameer Ali, helped create a trust to look after the property. In the months ahead, Kamal-ud-Din would become the imam of the mosque, and it re-opened on August 12, 1913.¹²⁸ The place of worship is named after Begum Shah Jahan, after her generous donations paid for most of the renovations.¹²⁹ She would make her first official visit to the mosque in 1925.¹³⁰

As we saw with *The Muslim Sunrise* magazine in the United States, the mosque had its own periodical titled *The Islamic Review*. Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din inaugurated the magazine in 1913 and it continued to publish until around 1970. Many guest articles and editorials addressed the misrepresentations of Islam in the British press. Like other literature, it sought to challenge negative stereotypes about Muslims and Islam, alongside more traditional outreach. One of the earliest examples of challenging media inaccuracies appeared in March 1913. An article in the *Times* newspaper suggested that criticism of foreign policy from Muslims were signs of 'disloyalty'. An argument that remains controversial more than a century later.

In response, an article in the *Islamic Review* argued in favour of freedom of speech:

We 'pay taxes the same as any Christian or Jew,' and we loyally give our services to the Crown. We have every legitimate right to disapprove of any Government measure which, in our judgment, may affect adversely our interests in India or abroad.¹³¹

Interfaith dialogue with Christians underscored much of its content. But that did not absolve the faith of criticism. One such criticism, published in 1914, concerned Christianity's perceived disunity and failures. A guest article argued that "the pioneers of Islam are needed to teach the west the virtue they so lack, and that is – charity".¹³² Christians also submitted articles to the magazine. It also featured the testimonials of converts, including Lord Headley (1855–1935). If this periodical promoted dialogue with Christians, it also offered political disagreement. Like its American counterpart, articles criticised the racism within Christianity. One such example appeared in October 1919. A letter from a convert described how he had converted to Islam due to 'absence of colour prejudice among Muslims'. The British soldier and convert, Lieutenant Joseph Abdullah, wrote: "the whites occupy a separate part of the church (and invariably the forepart too!). But in mosques, the racial barriers are non-existent".¹³³

The Woking mosque drew male converts during and soon after World War I. Some converted while on leave from the army - like Abdul-Aziz Peach in 1915. His letters, written during his time in the trenches of France, spoke of how Islam had reduced his sense of loneliness. Another ex-soldier who converted at the Woking mosque did so to remedy the gambling and alcohol addictions he had developed in the trenches.¹³⁴ The Woking Muslim Mission and mosque offered a progressive, egalitarian and modern vision of Islam. Its mission statement made clear that "Islam creates a universal brotherhood of people of all countries, races, colours, classes and cultures, disregarding all such distinctions." It argued in favour of religious freedom, tolerance of other faiths, and removed from the cultural ties of any Muslim-majority country.¹³⁵

As they did not join pre-established Muslim communities, they had to forge their own Islamic identity, which spoke to their own cultural backgrounds.¹³⁶ The mosque also hosted social events on Sunday afternoons. For middle class converts, it offered practicality over theology. Lord Headley's pilgrimage to Mecca generated a great deal of public interest. A prolific author, Headley argued that Islam would thrive in the British cultural context.¹³⁷ Other high profile converts included Lord Stanley of Alderley, Charles William Buchanan Hamilton, Deputy Surgeon General in the British Army, and a nephew to a former President of the United States.¹³⁸

Research found that there was no single motivating factor for conversions to Islam in Britain during the first half of the twentieth century. Aside from promoting the stories of converts in their periodical, the missionaries in Woking maintained strict records about converts.¹³⁹ Given that the magazine was the printed arm of their missionary work, the stories likely served to propagate a certain narrative. To the betterment of historical memory, their data collection remains a reliable resource. Between 1913 and 1953, Woking mosque helped converted 483 Britons - 260 male, 220 female and some unknowns. A majority of the data also gives the year of conversion. What's curious to note is the slight upsurge in conversions during times of war. The small sample prevents us drawing broader trends. Yet the brutality of war may have led some to seek the religious life outside of Christianity. And it speaks to why the Islamic Review promoted the conversions of British soldiers in 1915.¹⁴⁰

This unifying vision of Islam, propagated among the Ahmadi missionaries in Woking mirrored Abdullah Quilliam's outreach work in Liverpool. Writing in the Harvard Theological Review in 1929, James Thayer Addison, wrote about the 'deceptive' tactics of Ahmadis:

Its leaders, especially in England, are eager to adapt their message to the convictions or the fashions of the present hour and to exploit the ignorance of their audience by making any assertions that will favor their cause. Intellectually more acceptable than the Qadiani, they inspire less respect, for one usually prefers the naive and narrow-minded to the sophisticated and slippery.¹⁴¹

Before his death in 1932, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din had established a trust to build a mosque in London in 1928, this was later absorbed into the present-day Regents Park Mosque Trust.¹⁴²

Some years earlier, other Ahmadi missions had arrived in London. The head of the Lahori Ahmadi movement, Hazrat Khalifa-tul-Masih II, had decided that the financial strength of London would prove a suitable base for their outreach work. Both Ahmadi sects would now publish their own periodicals in the UK. A plot of land in south-west London was soon brought for £6,223 in 1920 - most of it raised by women in India – who sold personal artefacts.¹⁴³ By 1924, the foundation stone of the mosque was in place. Part of the inscription read:

I pray to God that He may accept this humble and sincere effort of all the members of the Ahmadiyya Community, both women and men, and that He may provide means for the growing prosperity of this mosque; and may He make it for ever and ever a centre for promulgating the views of purity, piety, justice and love, and may this place prove a sun of spiritual light radiating forth in this country and in all the countries around the blessed beams of the heavenly light of the Holy Prophet Mohammad the Chosen one of God and the seal of the prophets and of Ahmad the Promised Messiah, the prophet of God, the Vicegerent, and the reflection of Mohammad (may peace and the blessings of God be upon them both). Amen.¹⁴⁴

Construction work ended in October 1926. Media outlets covered the opening of the mosque in print and in news reel.¹⁴⁵ Some 600 people, including foreign dignitaries, attended its grand opening. Political support helped assuage public hostility for the project. It would later serve a distinct political function in the interwar years.¹⁴⁶ In 1936, Lloyd George gave a lecture on "Islam in the British Empire" to dignitaries and scholars. This soft propaganda effort was a direct response to post-colonial movements across Europe.¹⁴⁷ Some Ahmadi literature had also expressed support for the British Raj, though it did offer occasional criticism.¹⁴⁸ Few British converts knew of sectarianism within Islam or even the fundamental differences between Shia and Sunni sects. Nor was this split important, as it seemed detached from their lives in Britain.¹⁴⁹ Sectarianism among Ahmadis had consequences for converts in England.¹⁵⁰ In the interwar years, an Ahmadi imam named Abdur Rahim Dard, is said to have convinced Muhammad Jinnah, who helped found Pakistan in 1947, to return to Indian politics. In 1933, Dard arranged for Jinnah to lecture on the future of India at the London mosque.¹⁵¹

Ahmadis in Pakistan and the growth of sectarianism

The prejudice, violence and discrimination against Ahmadi communities in Pakistan did not exist in a vacuum. Constitutional amendments declaring Ahmadis as non-Muslim in 1974 speaks to the failure of governance and the influence of the fundamentalists who had protested, sometimes with violence, for decades, in an effort to redefine the Islamic identity of Pakistan. This became "a moment in Pakistan's history in which the margins of the 'Muslim nation' were symbolically (re)constructed to exclude the Ahmadiyya community from the boundaries of Muslim citizenship".¹⁵² It is worth remembering that Pakistan did not become an 'Islamic Republic' until 1956 – despite its founding in 1947.¹⁵³ Nor did the state offer a clear vision of Muslim citizenship. Those seeking to define the role of Islam were of "various political, sectarian, and ethnic persuasions".¹⁵⁴ This had distorted Jinnah's vision of a separate Muslim state founded on pluralism and religious freedom. Jinnah believed that the will of the people would create a state that was a non-sectarian, non-denominational, with an Islamic ethos. In the days before the official founding of Pakistan, Jinnah, then acting as President of the Constitutional Assembly, spoke of the challenges ahead and how to overcome them. He declared on August 11, 1947 that:

We should begin to work in that spirit and in course of time all these angularities of the majority and minority communities, the Hindu community and the Muslim community, because even as regards Muslims you have Pathans, Punjabis, Shias, Sunnis and so on, and among the Hindus you have Brahmins, Vashnavas, Khattris, also Bengalis, Madrasis and so on, will vanish. Indeed if you ask me, this has been the biggest hindrance in the way of India to attain the freedom and independence and but for this we would have been free people long long ago. No power can hold another nation, and specially a nation of 400 million souls in subjection; nobody could have conquered you, and even if it had happened, nobody could have continued its hold on you for any length of time, but for this. Therefore, we must learn a lesson from this. You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place or worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed that has nothing to do with the business of the State.¹⁵⁵

Thus, Jinnah envisioned a state where religious identity was distinct from politics. And that Hindus and Muslims would forgo their individual faith 'in the political sense as citizens of the State'. His tone was a fig leaf towards tolerance and reconciliation. This position was reflected in Pakistan's first official cabinet. Jinnah picked Sir Chaudhry Zafarullah Khan, who was an Ahmadi, as Foreign Minister.¹⁵⁶ Jogendra Nath Mandal, a Hindu, became the first Law and Labour Minister of Pakistan.¹⁵⁷

Partition had its own impacts on Ahmadis. They had no formal position on the Pakistan question. Nor did they favour Indian independence. For years, some groups had pressured Indian Muslims to address the 'Ahmadi question'. Jinnah's Muslim League courted the Ahmadi vote in the 1946 elections. Jinnah had also complained to the viceroy in Punjab about the voting restrictions placed upon Ahmadis. The death of Jinnah in 1948 made the position of minorities more fragile.¹⁵⁸

Liaquat Ali Khan, Pakistan's first Prime Minister, claimed that the 'Islamic character' of Pakistan's first written constitution carried the spirit of Jinnah's vision, others disagreed. Hindus and Christians were unconvinced. Amendments to further protect minority rights in Pakistan's constitution failed to pass. Mandal became politically isolated and resigned in 1950. His resignation letter accused the Prime Minister of undermining Jinnah's vision "to the detriment and humiliation of the minorities".¹⁵⁹

A lack of protection for religious minorities allowed some to pursue an anti-Ahmadi agenda. In 1949, the Ahrar party, a deeply conservative Sunni movement, demanded the removal of all Ahmadis from public office.¹⁶⁰ By 1953, the right wing Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) movement, a persistent and influential anti-Ahmadi agitator, threatened political action if the government did not declare Ahmadis as non-Muslim. This political action came before the infamous Lahore Riots of 1953. Abul Ala Maududi, the Islamic scholar who founded the JI, had also published anti-Ahmadi treatises. Maududi had rejected Muslim nationalism in colonial India, yet embraced it when politically expedient.¹⁶¹ In response to the dangers of Western imperialism in the Muslim world, Maududi believed that Muslims must, if, all else fails, prepare for war. This was a major departure from most major Islamic thinkers and demonstrates his capacity for promoting violence.¹⁶²

In response to this agitation, the state began to arrest religious leaders. The violence of the subsequent riots in Lahore left 300 dead and countless injured. It led to the imposition of martial law for 70 days.¹⁶³ A judicial inquiry looked into the causes of the riot. Justice Muhammad Munir and Justice M.R. Kiyani of the Lahore High Court issued a 387-page report. Several newspapers, some in receipt of government money, faced criticism for publishing anti-Ahmadi cartoons.¹⁶⁴ Other newspapers had deliberately misquoted leading Ahmadi figures in public life.¹⁶⁵ The report also sought to address some deeper questions: what is Islam? Who is a Muslim? It noted that the main religious body provided no clear answers on either matter. It also took a strong stance on religious freedom and individual rights.¹⁶⁶

Within a year, however, religious fundamentalists continued to lobby, and sectarian violence continued to ebb and flow. The 1950s were a turbulent period in Pakistan's political history, where dictatorships came and went.¹⁶⁷ In 1962, additional constitutional amendments gave an Islamic framework to the law. No law could be 'repugnant' to the teachings and requirements of Islam. The Advisory Council of Islamic Ideology would ensure that legislation conformed with the teachings of Islam.¹⁶⁸ This slow burning 'Islamification' of Pakistan's constitution may have appeased the religious right; but it would not last.

The 'Ahmadi question' resurfaced in 1974. It began when some 160 student members of the Jamaat-i-Islami had boarded a train to Peshawar on May 22, 1974. The train stopped in Rabwah, the spiritual headquarters of the Ahmadi, and where many of the community resided.¹⁶⁹ Student members of the Jamaat-i-Islami started a chorus of anti-Ahmadi slogans as they left the train. It passed without incident until sections of the Ahmadi leadership learned of this protest. Soon young Ahmadi men were told to gather hockey sticks and other weapons and await news of their return journey.¹⁷⁰ This provocation created a cycle of retaliatory violence against Ahmadis in the Punjab province. Ahmadi students were forced out of hostels, their personal effects burnt. Ahmadi-run businesses received menacing phone calls and arson attacks. Other Ahmadi-owned businesses were subject to mob violence which left 27 Ahmadis dead. According to a report in the *Times* newspaper, published in 1974, 200 Ahmadis had their houses burnt down, and 300 commercial properties owned by Ahmadis were looted and set on fire by rioters.¹⁷¹ Arguably, this incident galvanised the religious right against the Ahmadi. Perhaps out of sympathy or mutual interest, Jamaat-i-Islami had new political allies. Their anti-Ahmadi demands grew louder. Smaller demands included the removal of Ahmadis from political life. Sympathetic newspapers ran editorials calling for boycotts of Ahmadi businesses.¹⁷²

If the religious right was predictable in its anti-Ahmadi demands, so was the state response to dissent. A large number of Ahmadis and non-Ahmadis were arrested on suspicion of stoking sectarian violence. It came down to a high court judge in Lahore to get the root causes of the Rabwah violence. There was a sustained effort from the Bhutto government to stem the tide

of anti-Ahmadi sentiment through political engagement, not violence. This proved a break from political tradition.¹⁷³ Prime Minister Bhutto faced the real prospect of losing control of the situation. The religious right threatened industrial strike action. In an effort to assert control, Bhutto made a fundamental and dramatic concession, the National Assembly would now discuss the Ahmadi question.¹⁷⁴ This soon turned into a Special Committee, which debated if Ahmadis were indeed Muslim. Various heads of Ahmadi groups testified and took answers from committee members. A leaked section of the final report alleged that the Ahmadi leadership had declared non-Ahmadis as outside of Islam.¹⁷⁵

On September 7, 1974, the Ahmadi community was declared a non-Muslim religious minority. This stemmed much of the anti-Ahmadi violence. Some Ahmadis with the financial means began to leave Pakistan.¹⁷⁶ This dramatic concession, however, gave succour to the religious right. Kausar Niazi, one of Bhutto's ministers, held meetings with various religious groups to listen to their anti-Ahmadi demands.¹⁷⁷ Niazi had been a member of Jamaat-i-Islami and spent time in prison for his part in the Lahore Riots in 1953.¹⁷⁸ Public opinion also favoured the religious right on the Ahmadi question. Suddenly, across politics, newspaper editorials, and public opinion, were calls for a democratic solution to this 'crisis'.¹⁷⁹ The violence in Rabwah convinced anti-Ahmadi groups that the community was an existential threat to Pakistani society. In the journal *Chitan*, it ran the headline: "100 Students of Nishtar Medical College Attacked by Qadiyani Dogs in Rabwah".¹⁸⁰

Bhutto's concession to the religious right came not from personal conviction, but from "a misplaced sense of self-preservation," according to Raja Tridev Roy, who had served in Bhutto's government as the Minister of Minority Affairs and Tourism.¹⁸¹ This concession exemplifies some of the weaknesses within the Bhutto government. During the 1970 elections, many Ahmadi had voted for Bhutto, hoping his liberal agenda would blunt the worst excesses of the religious right.¹⁸² Allowing the religious right to influence the Ahmadi question was not the only failure of Bhutto's liberal and secular agenda. The Bhutto government had approached Arab states for political and economic support during the oil embargo of 1973. Lahore soon became host to the Islamic Summit Conference which allowed his government to formally recognise Bangladesh following the violent partition of 1971.¹⁸³ The teaching of Arabic was encouraged and Pakistan soon hosted more religious conferences nationwide.¹⁸⁴ Constitutional amendments in 1973 codified Islam as the state religion. It stipulated that the President and Prime Minister of Pakistan must be Muslim. A clear concession to the anti-Ahmadi lobby appeared in its leadership oath. It required both leaders to make a declaration of faith in the unity of Allah, the books of Allah, and in the finality of the Prophet Muhammad.¹⁸⁵ Both examples demonstrate how the Bhutto government had changed the relationship between Islam and the state. In addition, it gave the religious and political coalitions the momentum to push through anti-Ahmadi legislation one year later.

In July 1977, General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq seized power from Bhutto in a military coup. A key goal of the Zia-ul-Haq regime was to transform society through the lens of Sunni orthodoxy. This required co-opting the religious right. Seizing an opportunity for further change, the anti-Ahmadi lobby had new demands. In the early part of 1984, fundamentalist clerics demanded further anti-Ahmadi legislation and the strict implementation of the 1974 constitutional amendment. A failure to meet these demands by April 30, 1984, would result in fresh waves of anti-Ahmadi violence.¹⁸⁶ To placate the fundamentalists and build political support, President Zia-ul-Haq agreed to their demands within days of the original deadline. The 1974 amendment classified Ahmadis as non-Muslim with little legal ramifications. The amendment to the penal code, known as Ordinance XX, further marginalised Ahmadi religious freedoms. They could no longer self-define as Muslim. Nor could they propagate their faith, use Muslim practises in worship or make appellations associated with the Prophet.¹⁸⁷ In

August 1985, the United Nations Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities passed a resolution expressing their concern that Ordinance XX:

violated the rights to liberty and security of persons, to freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention, to freedom of thought, expression, conscience and religion and to an effective legal remedy, as well as the right of religious minorities to practise their own religion¹⁸⁸

In 1986, further amendments to the penal code made defiling the name of the Prophet Muhammad punishable by death or life imprisonment. Data from NGOs and cited by the U.S. State Department in 2006 found that 695 people were accused of blasphemy between 1986 and 2006.¹⁸⁹ Of that figure, 362 were Muslims, 262 were Ahmadis, 86 were Christians and 10 were Hindus. Around 5,000 blasphemy cases occurred between 1984 and 2004. Of that figure, 964 people faced blasphemy charges.¹⁹⁰

Jamaat-i-Islami remained a key figure in the anti-Ahmadi movement in Pakistan. A bulk of their membership came from the urban and educated middle and lower classes who viewed the Ahmadi community as a political threat due to their perceived wealth and political influence. Perceptions of Ahmadi wealth contributed to the hostile political climate in 1974.¹⁹¹ Externalising the Ahmadi as a political threat allowed the Jamaat-i-Islami leadership to build broader political coalitions and credibility. The latter became crucial in bringing about the 1974 constitutional amendment. The public 'outcry' towards the Ahmadi had legitimised any form of bigotry towards the community as an acceptable part of the democratic process.¹⁹² In the past, flashpoints of anti-Ahmadi violence, like the Lahore Riots of 1953, were crushed by the state. The government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1973 to 1978), however, was not prepared to use violence when faced with the same dissent. This gave the movement fresh momentum against a government in need of support. Pushing through anti-Ahmadi legislation helped divert attention from the crisis of Muslim citizenship. The exclusion of Ahmadis turned the question of Muslim identity into one of politics, not religion.¹⁹³ The shifting political boundaries of Muslim identity in Pakistan had consequences beyond Ahmadi exclusion. It had encouraged Sunni sectarian leaders to apply a similar approach to the Shia minority. This came at a time of heightened militant sectarianism between both groups in the 1980s. The Sunni sectarian terrorist group Sipah-i-Sahaba (SSP) emerged in 1985. Its founder had been involved with anti-Ahmadi agitations in 1974. Members of Glasgow Central Mosque had recently made headlines following their alleged links to the group.¹⁹⁴

Before the dictatorship of Zia-ul-Haq, the relationship between Islam and the state had proven ambiguous. The strict Islamification of society through the lens of Sunni orthodoxy infuriated parts of Pakistan's Shia minority. One example of tension stemmed from the implementation of the zakat tax - as Sunni and Shiite jurisprudence differ on how much a person must pay. The privileging of Sunni orthodoxy encouraged the groups seeking to exploit a millennium of differences between Sunni and Shia communities. This resulted in the "Islamisation of education and student politics created mass sectarian consciousness far beyond the confines of the madrasa. Since then, "instead of teaching religion, governments seek to teach 'correct 'religion".¹⁹⁵

The constitutional amendments which curtailed the religious freedoms of Ahmadis continue to inspire hatred, discrimination and violence in Pakistan. Groups like Khatme Nabuwat hold conferences on this topic. This is often a proxy for expressing deeper, more hostile views towards Ahmadi communities.¹⁹⁶ A later section will detail more recent examples of anti-Ahmadi violence and rhetoric in Pakistan.

Ahmadi missionaries in Indonesia and the growth of sectarianism

The prejudice and violence faced by the Ahmadi community in Indonesia draws some comparison to the situation in Pakistan. Yet the origins of the movement begin with mutuality. Sectarianism evolved from external and internal factors.

The first Ahmadi missionary to meet the Indonesian people was a Lahori Ahmadi in 1920. Other Ahmadi missionaries were treated with respect and considered 'older brothers' among some Islamic bodies.¹⁹⁷ For a short time, these missionaries were considered the perfect partners to spread the word of Islam and help resist the work of colonial Christian missionaries.¹⁹⁸ This relationship soured after an Indian scholar, when on a visit to the region, highlighted theological differences.¹⁹⁹ Despite some early setbacks, Ahmadis achieved some religious recognition in 1953.²⁰⁰ A fatwa issued in 1980 demonstrated a clear link between anti-Ahmadi rhetoric and violence. The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), a nationwide clerical body which produces fatwas, had declared the Ahmadis as 'heretics'. Despite the non-legally binding nature of that particular fatwa, it motivated anti-Ahmadi groups to carry out acts of violence a few short years later.²⁰¹

With the fall of the Suharto regime in 1998, came new challenges and hostilities for the Ahmadis. Some Muslim groups saw rapid democratisation as a chance to lobby for an increased role of Islam in public life and government. Once again, Ahmadis were externalised as existential threats to the harmony of this Islamic society. Amid political setbacks in 1999 and 2004, political groups had also failed to bring about an Islamic state in 2002.²⁰²

In 2005, the MUI, re-issued its anti-Ahmadi fatwa, it also demanded that the government declare the Ahmadi community as being 'outside of Islam'.²⁰³ Some have argued that the persistence of the MUI stems from a position of perceived weakness. In short, the group feared a loss of influence in the face of Ahmadi missionaries.²⁰⁴

The most high-profile example of anti-Ahmadi violence occurred in 2005, when coordinated acts of violence forced the Jamaah Ahmadiyah Indonesia (JAI) to close its main office. At the same time, the government was meeting with the MUI, Ahmadi groups and other faith groups.²⁰⁵ Attacks extended to Ahmadi places of worship and individuals across the region. On the island of Lombok, violence had forced over two hundred Ahmadis into temporary shelter for over two years.²⁰⁶ At a local level, calls for a ban on the Ahmadi community gathered momentum. Some cities and provinces enacted their own restrictions on Ahmadi religious rights. Yet, there was no national consensus for a ban in 2005.²⁰⁷ Against this backdrop was a desire to put Ahmadis on the 'correct' path to Islam. The Coordinating Board for Monitoring Mystical Beliefs in Society (Bakor Pakem) issued a 12-point plan which encouraged Ahmadis to renounce their views about Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's prophethood. A failure to meet the terms of the plan resulted in the Bakor Pakem calling for a nationwide ban.²⁰⁸ This news drew support and criticism from major Islamic organisations. And gave the religious right fresh 'justification' to carry its campaign of violence and lobbying.²⁰⁹

Since 1976, there have been 26 examples of anti-Ahmadi decisions from Indonesian governments, yet none had sufficiently met the demands of the religious right until 2008.²¹⁰ A renewed push for anti-Ahmadi legislation resulted in fresh violence. During public gatherings, members of the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) were 'encouraged' to kill Ahmadis.²¹¹ In the town of Sukabumi, on the main island of Java, extremists had set ablaze an Ahmadi place of worship and chanted "Destroy! Destroy!". The attack was linked to members of the FPI.²¹² The fatwas issued by the MUI in 2005 and 2007 were interpreted by groups like the FPI as a call to action.²¹³

Perhaps the most infamous example of anti-Ahmadi violence occurred during a peaceful protest on June 1, 2008, in the capital Jakarta. The National Alliance for the Freedom of Faith and Religion (AKKBB) had brought together interfaith and community activists in the name of pluralism and in support of the Ahmadi community. It also fell on the 63rd anniversary celebration of the state ideology. The peaceful protest turned violent after 400 members of Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) and Hibz ut-Tahrir Indonesia (HT) and other groups attacked AKKBB protesters. This resulted in 70 injuries, some serious in nature. Despite a strong police presence, there was no intervention or initial arrests.²¹⁴ Some went on to accuse the police of complicity as mainstream Islamic organisations condemned the violence.²¹⁵ Rizieq Shihab, the leader of the FPI, received an 18-month prison sentence. In response to the conviction, members of the FPI had attempted to shut down a nearby Ahmadi place of worship.²¹⁶ This was a rare legal victory in a country where anti-Ahmadi violence goes unpunished. In 2008, a majority of Indonesia's 235 million population was Sunni Muslim. The Ahmadi community totalled just 200,000. As with Pakistan, anti-Ahmadi sentiment became a political tool to support weak governments.²¹⁷

Indonesia's constitution guarantees the freedom of individual faith. Yet anti-Ahmadi voices have argued that they fall foul of blasphemy laws from the 1960s.²¹⁸ An understated factor which drives anti-Ahmadi sentiment is cultural. A key factor in the internal displacement of Ahmadis owes to a perception that they do not want to assimilate. The threat of violence in villages often forced many Ahmadis to pray at home. To avoid confrontation, villagers in the area of Sukabami, had painted their houses to signify they are non-Ahmadi.²¹⁹ This led some villagers to drive Ahmadis out of their homes in 2006. Other stories included the Ahmadis who were unable to return to one village despite helping to build the local mosque.²²⁰ Yet this anti-Ahmadi violence did not extend to Jakarta due to good community relations. This led some to claim that the main drivers of anti-Ahmadi violence are not just theological. A point, however, many Ahmadis reject. Moderates feared that other religious minorities would be next. Andy Yentriyani, of the National Commission on Violence Against Women, told journalists that "If Ahmadiyah is the first one to be banned, then other minority groups will be the next target".²²¹

When the state restructures Islamic identity through the lens of Sunni Islam it has wider consequences. Defining communities as 'outside of' Islam narrows religious freedoms. In a country that is majority Sunni, this restructuring went beyond one minority sect. Moreover, this encouraged further violence as extremists increased their demands. It was only natural that their proscriptive interpretation of Islam would also exclude other minority sects. Radical sectarians go beyond an expression of this attitude in the hope of changing the religious fabric of a society.²²²

As with Pakistan, much of the anti-Shia rhetoric and violence from the religious right was a product of post-Iranian Revolution paranoia. This sectarianism grew from 1985 to the end of the Suharto regime in 1997. Shias were depicted as criminal elements seeking to undermine the fabric of Sunni Islam. Sporadic conferences offered a theological means to demonise Shia as an existential threat to the religious and cultural order.²²³

This intensification of anti-Shia sentiment had violent consequences. Between 2006 and 2013, relations between the state and religious minorities continued to change amid local, national and international political developments.²²⁴

The growing confidence of religious fundamentalists strengthened the role of Sunni orthodoxy in the public sphere, and in turn, intensified radical sectarianism into acts of violence. What drove some of this sectarian violence was the failure of the religious right at a democratic level. This failure meant that examples of anti-Ahmadi violence continued after the 2008 decree. Nor

did anti-Shia violence die out. It emerged from the ashes of political discussions which sought to exclude Shia communities from mainstream Islam. In 2011, the Religious Affairs Minister had argued that the Ahmadis were a heretical sect which "must be disbanded immediately".

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Ongoing consequences for Ahmadis in Pakistan and the United Kingdom

The thrust of this report has placed anti-Ahmadi prejudice and violence in a historical context. But it should not underscore the problems of today. This section will present some of the more recent examples of anti-Ahmadi violence and how this community faces different forms of discrimination. Figures revealed to the Guardian found a sharp rise in anti-Ahmadi incidents in the UK. In 2016, anti-Ahmadi incidents reported to Tell MAMA jumped from nine to 29.²²⁶ This rise may owe to the confidence the Ahmadi community has in reporting incidents. The Appendix expands upon the types of anti-Ahmadi reports sent to Tell MAMA in 2016.

There is a sense among some community elders that this problem will only get worse. Rafiq Ahmad Hayat, head of Britain's Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in the UK, told Mashable: "Unless the government take action, Britain will become like Pakistan, with a law and order regime".²²⁷ Ali Dayan Hasan, the former Pakistan director of Human Rights Watch, had warned the British government about the scale of the problem five years ago.²²⁸ If segments of the Ahmadi community felt confident to report to Tell MAMA, the sad truth is, that many do not contact the police. Mark Hamilton, the hate crime lead for the National Police Chiefs Council, acknowledged this shortfall.

we suspect strongly that interfaith hate crime is very underreported. The Ahmadi are very small, 30,000 against an overall Muslim community of 2.7 millions... in the last number of months we're getting a sense of issues developing in the Muslim community, not only about Ahmadi but also Sunni and Shia²²⁹

Amid a growing sense of fear, communities did stand together. Anti-extremism posters appeared on buses in Dundee, Glasgow, and Edinburgh after Asad Shah's murder. The event launch brought together faith groups across Scotland. Yet, absent were representatives of Glasgow Central Mosque and the Muslim Council of Scotland.²³⁰ According to the Guardian, both "sent their apologies at the last minute". A unique event, however, did bring Ahmadi, Sunni, Shia and Pakistani Christian communities together after Shah's murder.²³¹

Meanwhile, in Pakistan, the religious right regularly commemorates the declaration of Ahmadis as non-Muslim. Public platforms become the means to incite hate and violence. According to the Jinnah Institute, police in parts of Pakistan, display indifference or compliance with anti-Ahmadi groups.²³² Khatme Nabuwwat remain the largest religious organisation who target Ahmadis. Their religious conferences serve as a proxy for anti-Ahmadi views. The rhetoric recycles myths of Ahmadi disloyalty to Islam and Pakistan. This hate speech infers that Ahmadis owe their loyalty to Israel (a proxy for Jewish communities) and the British.²³³ Against this backdrop of fiery rhetoric, is public boycotts, violence and targeted killings. The most shocking example of the latter took place in May 2010. Local members of the Pakistani Taliban targeted two Ahmadi places of worship on May 28, 2010. Armed with guns, grenades, and suicide bombs, they killed 94 Ahmadis and injured over 100 people.²³⁴ Government officials faced stern criticism due to their failure to guarantee the safety of Ahmadi worshippers. In 2015, an anti-terrorism court sentenced two men to death for their role in the attacks.²³⁵ Ahmadi businesses or places of worship have faced vandalism or arson attack in recent years. In 2014, accusations of blasphemy resulted in the murder of an Ahmadi woman and two children. An angry mob had also attacked and burnt five houses, a storage building and several cars. The attacks took place in Gujranwala, a city in Pakistan's Punjab province. Again, local Ahmadis accused local police of indifference to the crimes.²³⁶ A failure to define blasphemy means that anyone can file a complaint of religious injury. At a criminal level, it can mean the death penalty. But in reality, it is often used as a political tool to settle scores. An accusation of blasphemy, can, in many cases result in mob violence.²³⁷

Societal discrimination, hate speech, and propaganda against Ahmadis in Pakistan is widespread.²³⁸ Hate speech often goes unchallenged in the media. Many Ahmadis are reluctant to reveal their faith in public due to the political ramifications. Discrimination also has an economic impact due to boycotts and death threats. Many will not report hate crimes to police out of fear of repeat victimisation. Or out fear of falling foul of blasphemy laws.²³⁹

Figures about the size of Ahmadi communities in Pakistan are imprecise. Austria's Federal Ministry of Interior found that it ranges from 600,000 to around 2 to 5 million.²⁴⁰ The smaller Lahore branch has around 30,000 adherents around the globe, with around 5,000 to 10,000 in Pakistan. Despite its small size, the impacts of blasphemy laws have had lasting impacts since 1984. For example, 765 Ahmadis were arrested for displaying Kalima, i.e. "There is none worthy of worship except Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah" between 1984 and 2015. In that same time frame, 447 Ahmadis were arrested for 'posing' as Muslims.²⁴¹

One notable example occurred in 2012, Masud Ahmad, a dual British-Pakistani national, was jailed for "posing as a Muslim". Two people posing as patients entered his homeopathic clinic in Lahore. Instead of treatment, they began to question Ahmad's religious beliefs. In secret, they had filmed him on a mobile phone reciting a verse of the Qur'an, and then called police to have him arrested.²⁴² In 2014, Ahmad spoke to the BBC about his experiences in prison. He recalled a crowd of around 400 people who had protested outside. According to Ahmad, they had chanted, 'let us kill him, let us kill him'. Members of the Ahmadi community helped him flee Pakistan after he was granted bail at the third attempt.²⁴³

A person must declare their religion when applying for a national identity card (CNIC). If a person wishes to identify as Muslim, they must renounce Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and affirm Ahmadis as non-Muslim. The Islamification of Pakistani society under Zia-ul-Haq meant that some had declared as Ahmadi to avoid paying a zakat tax. A CNIC is needed when accessing healthcare or purchasing property. This exposes Ahmadis to the real prospect of discrimination. And as the data shows, hundreds were arrested between 1984 and 2015 for 'posing' as Muslim. Nor can Ahmadis perform hajj as their faith is listed on the second page of their passport. Voting restrictions mean that Ahmadis can only vote if registered as non-Muslim minorities.²⁴⁴

Discrimination limits the capacity for Ahmadis to worship in public. Between 1984 and 2014, authorities sealed 33 places of worship and prevented the building of 52 places of worship. In turn, extremists had demolished or damaged 31 places of worship, 14 were set on fire, and 19 were forcibly occupied.²⁴⁵ According to the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, the police have "had a poor record" or have been "ineffective" in protecting the Ahmadi community.²⁴⁶ In 2011, researchers from Pew found that two-in-three Pakistani Muslims say Ahmadis are non-Muslim. Almost a third of Pakistani Muslims polled, however, did not answer the question.²⁴⁷ Yet, the boundaries in which the state defines proselytising is stretched to curtail Ahmadi freedoms. A submission to the APPG for International Religious Freedom or Belief found that the attire worn by Ahmadi women can lead to direct discrimination as the garments is considered a form of 'proselytising'. Ahmadi women faced gendered verbal abuse - where perpetrators label them as "Mirzai" or "Mirzain".²⁴⁸

The spectre of sectarian hate will corrode community cohesion as long as groups continue to exploit the sensitivities of the blasphemy debate. This may yet, as Siobhain McDonagh MP, chair of the all-party parliamentary group for the Ahmadiyya community noted, morph into "an overspill of extremism from Pakistan to the UK". It is imperative that mistakes are corrected. Religious figures who have praised Mumtaz Qadri must be looked at with greater scrutiny by the Home Office. It's clear that anti-Ahmadi sentiment sits in the wider debates around blasphemy in Islam. While it's true that the Home Office has made efforts to understand this

problem, a recent report into the Ahmadi community did not give equal weight to the issues faced by Ahmadis in Britain. It should concern communities in Britain that in Pakistan, members of Khatme Nabuwwat recently took out paid adverts in some of the largest Urdu-language newspapers. In short, it sought to solicit funds in an effort to 'counter' the global Ahmadi 'propaganda'.²⁴⁹ This renewed campaign will, in all likelihood, target Ahmadi communities in Britain. It is of paramount importance that the recent revelations about Tanveer Ahmed's incitement to violence towards Ahmadis from prison is investigated by the Scottish Prison Service.²⁵⁰

Appendix: the realisation of anti-Ahmadi hate

Hate speech creates the environment for the dehumanisation of communities. It creates a sense of division and fear which sustains fractures between groups. Over the last few years, Ahmadi groups have suggested that, in their opinion, hatred against members of their community has increased. This claim cannot be verified, however, the national anti-Muslim hatred monitoring group, Tell MAMA, has received the following breakdown of intra-Muslim incidents since 2013.

Anti-Shia Incidents Reported in	Anti-Sunni Incidents Reported in	Anti-Ahmadi Incidents Reported in	Year
2	0	3	2013
17	3	2	2014
14	1	9	2015
9	2	29	2016 ¹

The rise in anti-Shia incidents were predominantly associated with the Syrian civil war. Muslims in Britain were targeted on the assumption of a Shia identity. The language deployed, be it street-based or online, had a sectarian tone. Overwhelmingly, the perpetrators were other Muslims. But it would prove difficult to verify if the perpetrators were Sunni in a majority of cases.

It must be noted that, while the numbers appear small, underreporting remains a problem. This owes in part to the lack of relevant third-party hate crime reporting agencies that serve our diverse Muslim communities nationwide. While this is changing, thanks in part to national projects like Tell MAMA, more work is required to ensure equal access to services.

With that in mind, Tell MAMA continues to record, in confidence, incidents of anti-Muslim hatred and intra-Muslim hatred. While a majority of casework reflects the former, Tell MAMA remains a non-sectarian project.

The above table reveals a sharp rise in anti-Ahmadi cases reported to Tell MAMA between 2015 and 2016. The murder of Asad Shah intensified the level of reporting to Tell MAMA staff. The rise may owe to the growing awareness of Tell MAMA's outspoken work on intra-Muslim issues. Nor should we discount how the murder of Asad Shah put Ahmadi communities into the spotlight.

Before Shah's murder, anti-Ahmadi sentiment did generate press interest earlier this year. In Scunthorpe, the Ahmadi community had been granted planning permission for a new place of worship. In spite of it serving the community for 12 years, two separate petitions were logged against the new planning application. One such petition concerned five local mosques who argued that the design of this place of worship would create 'tensions'.

A small, yet vocal protest soon occurred outside the proposed place of worship. Members of the Ahmadi community recorded the verbal abuse:

¹ The table highlights anti-Ahmadi hate incidents to the 1st of July 2016

"We don't want temples which you believe in. We are Muslims."

"You guys have come along from...I don't know where you guys have come from...which banana boat did you come from?"²⁵¹

Last June, sectarian graffiti appeared on the entrance of an Ahmadi place of worship in Crawley. The derogatory term, 'Qadyni (sic) Kafir', inferred that might have been written by a Muslim individual. The acts may lack a violent, physical edge. But it still causes great upset for the communities affected. Single acts of hatred never have a single victim when it seeks to demean entire communities.

The criminal targeting of faith communities is an affront to our shared values. This extends to attacks on mosques, churches, synagogues or gurdwaras. Criticism of religion and theological discussions are important part of any democratic society. Yet, the law is clear when these discussions morph into something darker, more insidious and hateful. Religious hate often does not exist in a vacuum and the backgrounds of perpetrators and their ideologies must be better understood.

The following case studies are just some examples of anti-Ahmadi hatred reported to Tell MAMA in 2016.

Reported to Tell MAMA on 24/06/2016:

An Asian male threw a brick through the window of an Ahmadi Mosque in South Yorkshire and the perpetrator made anti-Ahmadi comments.

Reported to Tell MAMA on 23/06/2016:

Outside an Ahmadi mosque in Walsall, two Muslims were chanting "*Sunnis are the best, Qadianis are kaffirs*"². This was intimidating to the congregation of people praying at the mosque and some congregants left on hearing this.

Reported to Tell MAMA on 06/06/2016:

Twitter user based in the UK wrote: "It is the duty of every Muslim to boycott Ahmadis".

Reported to Tell MAMA on 28/05/2016:

Threatening post made by Twitter user based in London who wrote: "Qadiani is not a sect. They are infidels and deserve to be killed if they don't leave their faith".

Reported to Tell MAMA on 25/04/2016:

² Regarded as a derogatory term as non-believers in God or 'unbelievers'

Anti-Ahmadi post made by a Facebook user based in the UK who referred to them as a “cult” and ‘Qaffirs’. He urged his Muslim family and friends to boycott several businesses in Bradford and Manchester, because they are allegedly run by Ahmadi.

Reported to Tell MAMA on 11/04/2016:

Facebook user reported that an anti-Ahmadi banner had been openly displayed at a mosque in Slough. The banner said that Ahmadi are not welcome into the mosque.

Reported to Tell MAMA on 03/02/2016:

An Ahmadi girl at a secondary school in South London was asked by one of her Muslim friends if she was an Ahmadi. When she replied that she was, the other girls used abusive language and told her that she was not a real Muslim. Following this incident, they segregated and isolated themselves from the girl at school.

These are just some of the cases that have been reported in. What is also interesting to note is that Ahmadi community members experience both anti-Muslim and intra-Muslim hatred. It is important to make clear that dissent and disagreement about Islamic identity is not illegal, nor should it be. Though it may prove spiritually or psychologically unhealthy, the individual right to hold such views exists as long as it stays within the remit of the law. If offensive statements are made in public, individuals have the right to challenge it through counter-speech.

¹ "Popular Glasgow Shopkeeper Stabbed to Death: Asad Shah Had Head Stamped on and Was Left in Pool of Blood in Brutal Attack - Daily Record," Dailyrecord, accessed July 2, 2016, <http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/popular-glasgow-shopkeeper-stabbed-death-7625471#c08VJKCCyXoviDy.97>.

² "Muslim Shopkeeper Murdered in Suspected 'religiously Prejudiced' Attack After Posting on Facebook of Love for Christians," The Telegraph, accessed July 2, 2016, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/03/26/muslim-shopkeeper-murdered-in-suspected-religiously-prejudiced-a/>.

³ "Man Charged with Murder of Glasgow Shopkeeper Asad Shah | UK News | The Guardian," The Guardian, accessed July 2, 2016, <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/mar/29/man-charged-with-of-glasgow-shopkeeper-asad-shah>.

⁴ "Nicola Sturgeon on Twitter: "My Heart Goes out to the Family of Asad Shah, a Popular Shopkeeper in My Constituency. My Thoughts Are with Them. <https://t.co/YUvTER0M2M>," Twitter, accessed July 2, 2016, <https://twitter.com/NicolaSturgeon/status/713416404645638148>.

⁵ "Asad Shah: Nicola Sturgeon Joins 500 People at Vigil As Defiant Locals Declare 'This is Not Who We Are' - Daily Record," Dailyrecord, accessed July 2, 2016, <http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/asad-shah-nicola-sturgeon-joins-7631680#EK87zYLEX7y9LK1b.97>.

⁶ "Asad Shah Family Fear for Safety After Killing Linked to Sectarian Tensions in Muslim Community (From Herald Scotland)," Herald Scotland, accessed July 3, 2016, http://www.heraldsotland.com/news/14386259.Asad_Shah_family_fear_for_safety_after_killing_linked_to_sectarian_tensions_in_Muslim_community/.

⁷ "Asad Shah Death: Man Admits Killing Shopkeeper Because He 'disrespected' Islam," BBC News, accessed July 3, 2016, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-35976958>.

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ "Position Statement: The Muslim Council of Britain and Ahmadis | Muslim Council of Britain (MCB)," Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) | Working for the Common Good, accessed July 3, 2016, <http://www.mcb.org.uk/position-statement-the-muslim-council-of-britain-and-ahmadis/>.

¹¹ "Murder in Glasgow: Muslim Council of Britain Condemns Religiously Aggravated Attack | Muslim Council of Britain (MCB)," Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) | Working for the Common Good, accessed July 3, 2016, <http://www.mcb.org.uk/murder-in-glasgow-mcb-condemns-religiously-aggravated-attack/>.

¹² "Ahmadiyya Muslim Community UK Response to MCB Statement | Love for All Hatred For None," Love for All, Hatred For None- An Official Website of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community UK, accessed July 3, 2016, <http://www.loveforallhatredfornone.org/ahmadiyya-muslim-community-uk-response-to-mcb-statement/>.

¹³ "Head of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Pays Tribute to Ahmadi Muslim Martyred in Scotland | Ahmadiyya Muslim Community International Press & Media Office," Ahmadiyya Muslim Community International Press & Media Office, accessed July 3, 2016, <http://www.pressahmadiyya.com/2016/04/head-of-ahmadiyya-muslim-community-pays.html>.

¹⁴ "HMA V Tanveer Ahmed - Judgments & Sentences - Judiciary of Scotland," Judiciary of Scotland, accessed August 16, 2016, <http://www.scotland-judiciary.org.uk/8/1639/HMA-v-Tanveer-Ahmed>.

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ "Man Who Murdered Glasgow Shopkeeper Asad Shah in Sectarian Attack Jailed | UK News | The Guardian." The Guardian. Accessed August 17, 2016. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/aug/09/tanveer-ahmed-jailed-for-murder-glasgow-shopkeeper-in-sectarian-attack>

¹⁷ "HMA V Tanveer Ahmed - Judgments & Sentences - Judiciary of Scotland," Judiciary of Scotland, accessed August 16, 2016, <http://www.scotland-judiciary.org.uk/8/1639/HMA-v-Tanveer-Ahmed>.

¹⁸ "Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2003." Legislation.gov.uk. Accessed September 20, 2016. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2003/7/section/74>.

¹⁹ "Asad Shah: Law Surrounding Religiously Aggravated Crimes to Be Reviewed in Wake of Murder (From Herald Scotland)." Herald Scotland. Accessed September 20, 2016. http://www.heraldsotland.com/news/14671862.Asad_Shah__Law_surrounding_religiously_aggravated_crimes_to_be_reviewed_in_wake_of_murder/.

²⁰ "Man Who Murdered Glasgow Shopkeeper Asad Shah in Sectarian Attack Jailed | UK News | The Guardian." The Guardian. Accessed August 17, 2016. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/aug/09/tanveer-ahmed-jailed-for-murder-glasgow-shopkeeper-in-sectarian-attack>

²¹ "Glasgow Murder of Asad Shah Spurred by Sectarianism in Pakistan | UK News | The Guardian," The Guardian, accessed August 17, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/aug/09/glasgow-of-asad-shah-spurred-by-sectarianism-in-pakistan>.

²² "Salman Taseer Murder: Pakistan Hangs Mumtaz Qadri." BBC News. Accessed September 20, 2016. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-35684452>.

²³ "Salman Taseer Murder: Mumtaz Qadri Sentenced to Death." BBC News. Accessed September 20, 2016. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-15135502>.

²⁴ "Mumtaz Qadri Supporters Rally in Islamabad After Clashes," BBC News, accessed August 17, 2016, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-35909716>.

²⁵ "Nearly 2,000 Pro-Qadri Protesters Continue Sit-in Outside Parliament - Pakistan - DAWN.COM." Home - DAWN.COM. Accessed August 17, 2016. <http://www.dawn.com/news/1248261>.

²⁶ "How Pakistan Inspired the Glasgow Shopkeeper Killer," BBC News, accessed August 16, 2016, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-37032419>.

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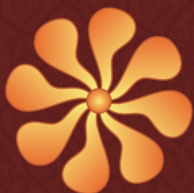
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